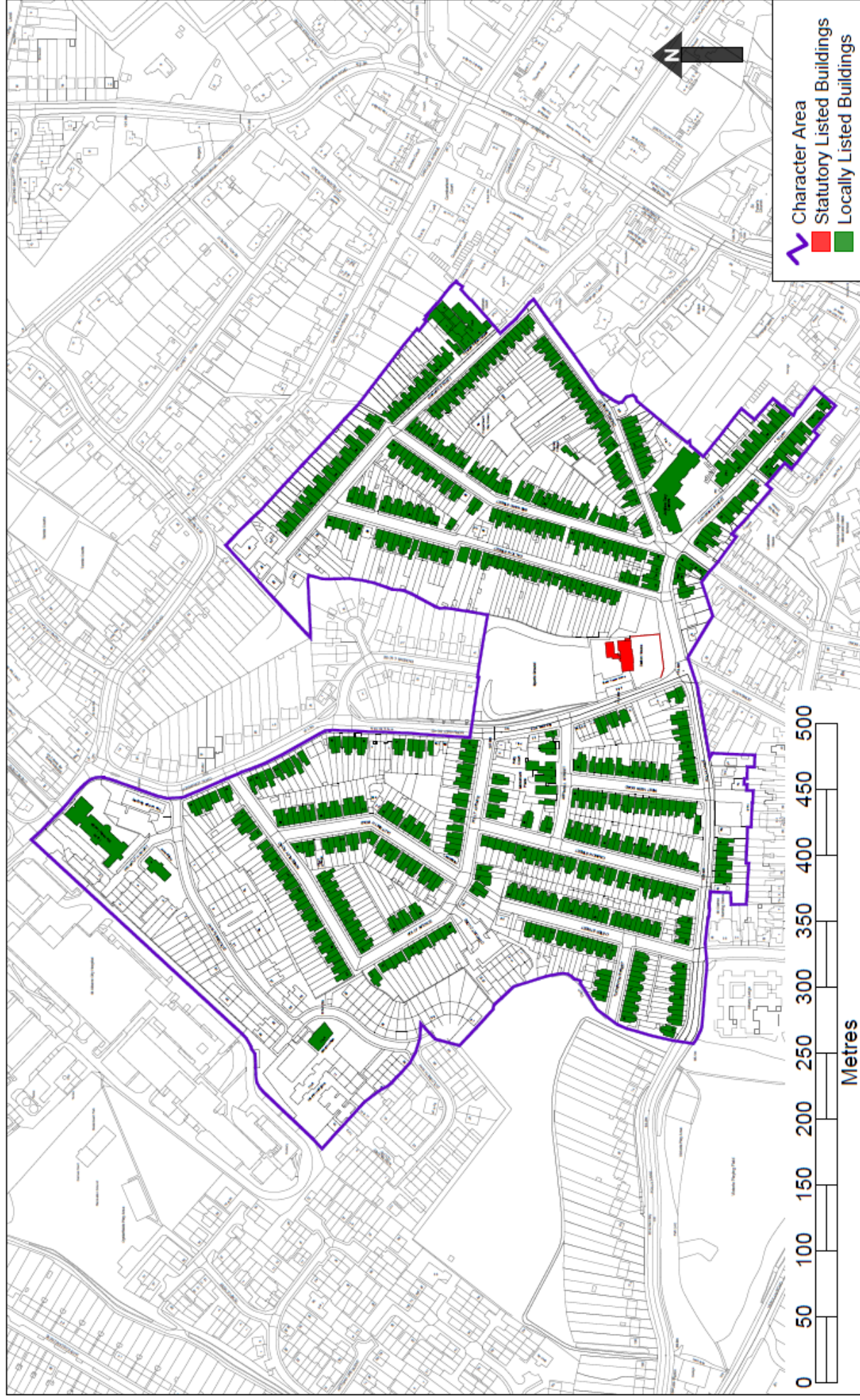





Character Area 7k
***Folly Lane, Garden Fields &
The Old Hospital***





 Character Area
 Statutory Listed Buildings
 Locally Listed Buildings

AREA 7K: FOLLY LANE, GARDEN FIELDS AND THE OLD HOSPITAL

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Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Ashwell Street, Bernard Street, Cannon Street, Catherine Street (part), Century Close, Church Street, Dalton Street, Falmouth Court, Folly Avenue, Folly Lane, Grange Street (part), Goldsmith Way (part), Kimberley Road, Ladysmith Road, Newmarket Court (part), Normandy Road (part), Oster Street, Thornton Street, West View Road.

Scheduled Monuments

None.

Listed Buildings

Dalton House (Grade II).

Wall, railings and gate piers to Dalton House (Grade II).



Dalton House. Image courtesy of John Bethell.

Locally Listed Buildings

Ashwell Street

1, 2 & 3 (Monument Place), 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10.

Bernard Street

Odds: 1-29 (incl.), 31-59 (incl.), 61, 63, 67-93 (incl.)

Evens: 2-36 (incl.), 38-50 (incl.), 54-78 (incl.).

Cannon Street

Odds: 5-71 (incl.).

Evens: 6-48 (incl.), 50, 52, 54, 56.

Catherine Street

(part)

Odds: 13, May Clarke House (15-25), 27-39 (incl.), 41-53 (incl.), 55-63 (incl.), 65-75 (incl.).

Evens: 30-52 (incl.), 54 ("Bar 62", formerly Pine-apple P.H.), "Jubilee Centre" (former school), 68-74 (incl.).

Church Street

Odds: 1-7 (incl.), 9-13 (incl.), 15-25 (incl.), Garden Cottage (r/o 37), 29-77 (incl.).

Evens: 14-34 (incl.).

Dalton Street

Odds: 1-61 (incl.), 63-87 (incl.), 93-101 (incl.).

Evens: 2-8 (incl.), 10-40 (incl.).

Falmouth Court

4 (formerly the chapel), Waverley Lodge (former Union Workhouse).

Folly Avenue

Odds: 9-19 (incl.), 21-25 (incl.), 27, 29, 45-69 (incl.).

Evens: 2-32 (incl.), 38-48 (incl.).

Folly Lane

Odds: 5-17 (incl.).

Evens: 2-20 (incl.), 22, 24, 26, 28-64 (incl.).

Goldsmith Way

Harriet Heights and Sisters Lodge (formerly Sisters Hospital and Maple Wing).

Grange Street (part)

Odds: 1-51 (incl.), 53-61 (incl.).

Evens: 8 (Grange Street Social Club), 10 (Grange Street Mews), 12, 14-42 (incl.), 4-88 (incl.).

Kimberley Road

Odds: 3-33 (incl.).

Evens: 2-10 (incl.), 12-62 (incl.).

Ladysmith Road

Odds: 3-41 (incl.), 43-47 (incl.).

Evens: 2-18 (incl.), 22-50 (incl.).

Normandy Road

Odds: 1, 3, 11-19 (incl.), 23, 27, 29-41 (incl.) 45-55 (incl.), 45-55 (incl.), 61-77 (incl.), 79-91 (incl.).

Oster Street

Odds: 1-35 (incl.).

Evens: 2-60 (incl.).

Thornton Street

Odds: 1-25 (incl.).

Evens: 2, 4-14 (incl.).

West View Road

Odds: 1-39 (incl.).

Evens: 6-18 (incl.), 22-34 (incl.).

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Character Summary

This character area is to the north west of the city centre and the north west boundary of this area is also the boundary of the conservation area. The Folly Lane / Garden Fields Character Area lies, for the most part, directly to the north of Catherine Street and Folly Lane, which together form one of the main westward routes out of the city.

This area is close to the city centre, and at its eastern edge lies on the plateau of level ground where the City evolved. Catherine Street runs westward from the main commercial street (St Peter's Street). Moving further westwards, towards the point where Catherine Street runs into Folly Lane, the land slopes away steeply towards the River Ver to the west. This well-defined topography guided the development of the area. Streets were largely plotted on a north south axis, radiating from the steep hill of Folly Lane, to take advantage of the level ground that this grid system would allow. This hillside location also ensures that, from this urban

area, occasional views can be glimpsed of the open countryside beyond the City to the west.

Catherine Street is a secondary shopping street within the city centre and, although comprised of predominantly small units in retail and service use, also includes a substantial residential element comprising terraced houses, houses divided into flats and flats above shops, set to the pavement edge. The Jubilee Day Centre, a former Victorian board school, punctuates this dense urban streetscape, being an elaborate building of larger scale, set back, with the playground to the fore, enabling views of St Peter's Church tower to be glimpsed from Catherine Street. These old school buildings add legibility to the street and mark the start of the gradual change of character from predominately commercial to one where residential development predominates.

The crossroads where Catherine Street runs



The topography of the area allows views of the surrounding countryside.



Catherine Street is a secondary shopping street.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Character Summary (contd.)

into Folly Lane, with Normandy Road running to the north and Gombards to the south, is the key node within the area. At this crossroads stands the unexpected centrepiece of the area, Dalton House (previously known as Bleak House). Formerly a country house, and subsequently used as the administrative headquarters for St Albans Hospital, this fine, Grade II listed, C18 house is the oldest and architecturally most important building in this area. It has recently been restored to its former glory and it has reverted, for the most part, to residential use.

The principal character of the remaining part of this area is a network of small-scale, mid C19, artisan terraces, and late C19 terraced and semi-detached housing. This predominantly residential area was developed between the mid-C19 and the turn of the 20th century. It forms an attractive and architecturally coherent part of St Albans' heritage of brick buildings, which is cohesive

in terms of the materials used and is rich in the architectural detailing of the era.

In 1996, the conservation area was extended to include the old hospital site, at the end of Normandy Road. The hospital site encompasses the original Union Workhouse and a number of Victorian institutional buildings which are not only important architecturally but also represent the early development of welfare and hospital facilities within the City. Subsequently, in the 1990s, the key institutional buildings have been converted to residential use and the surrounding land has been redeveloped for housing. The modern development references the adjoining C19 development, in its use of traditional materials, red brick and timber sash windows, and predominantly terraced form. The character is one of dense, urban, two and two and a half storey development, set on narrow roadways.



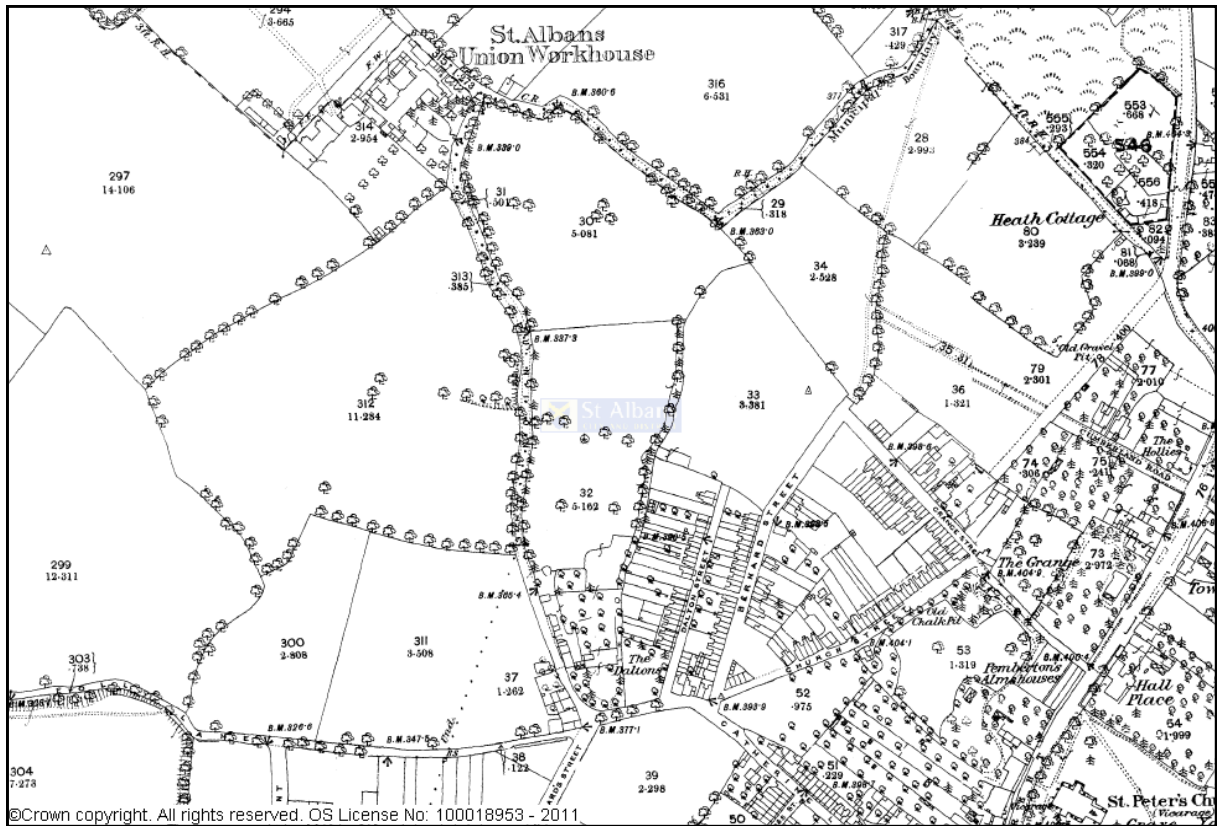
This area has a dense, urban, largely residential character, although there are some properties in other uses.



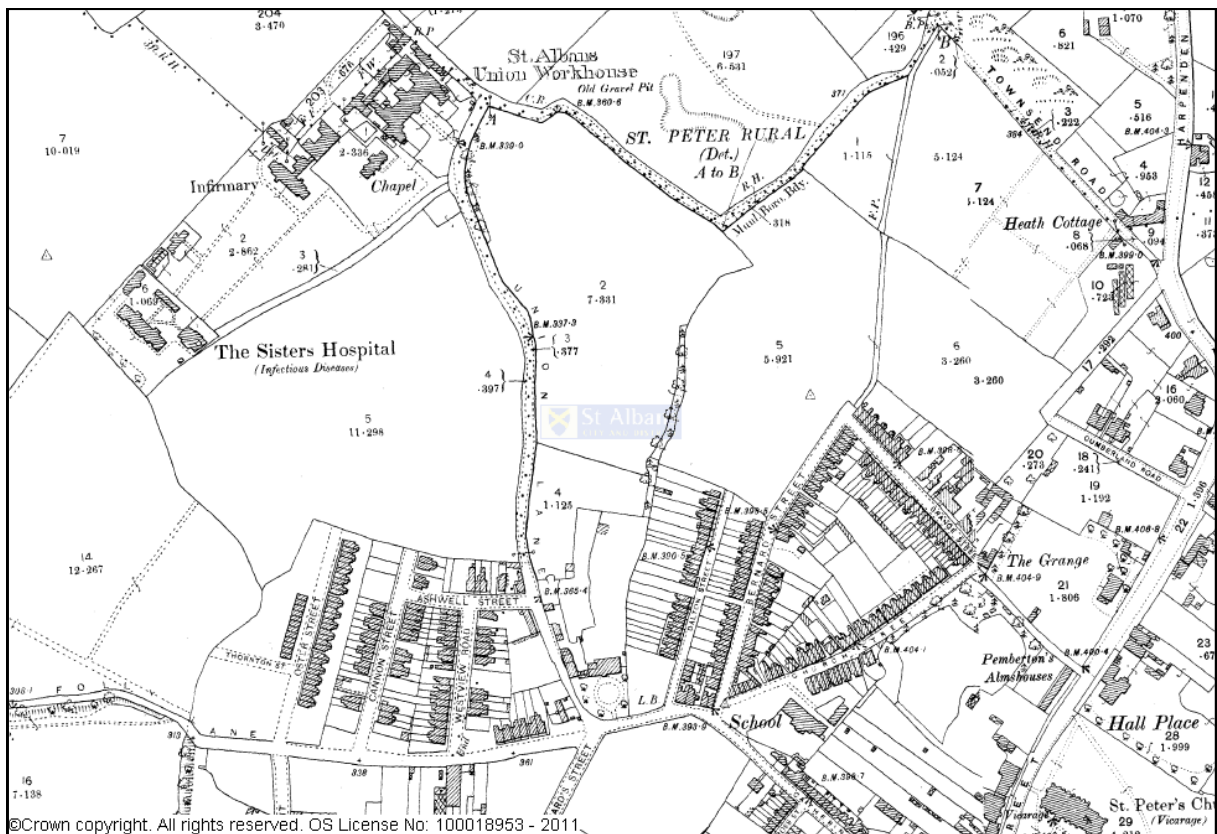
The Sisters Hospital site has now been converted to residential use. Image courtesy of St Albans Museums.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Historic Maps showing the development of the area



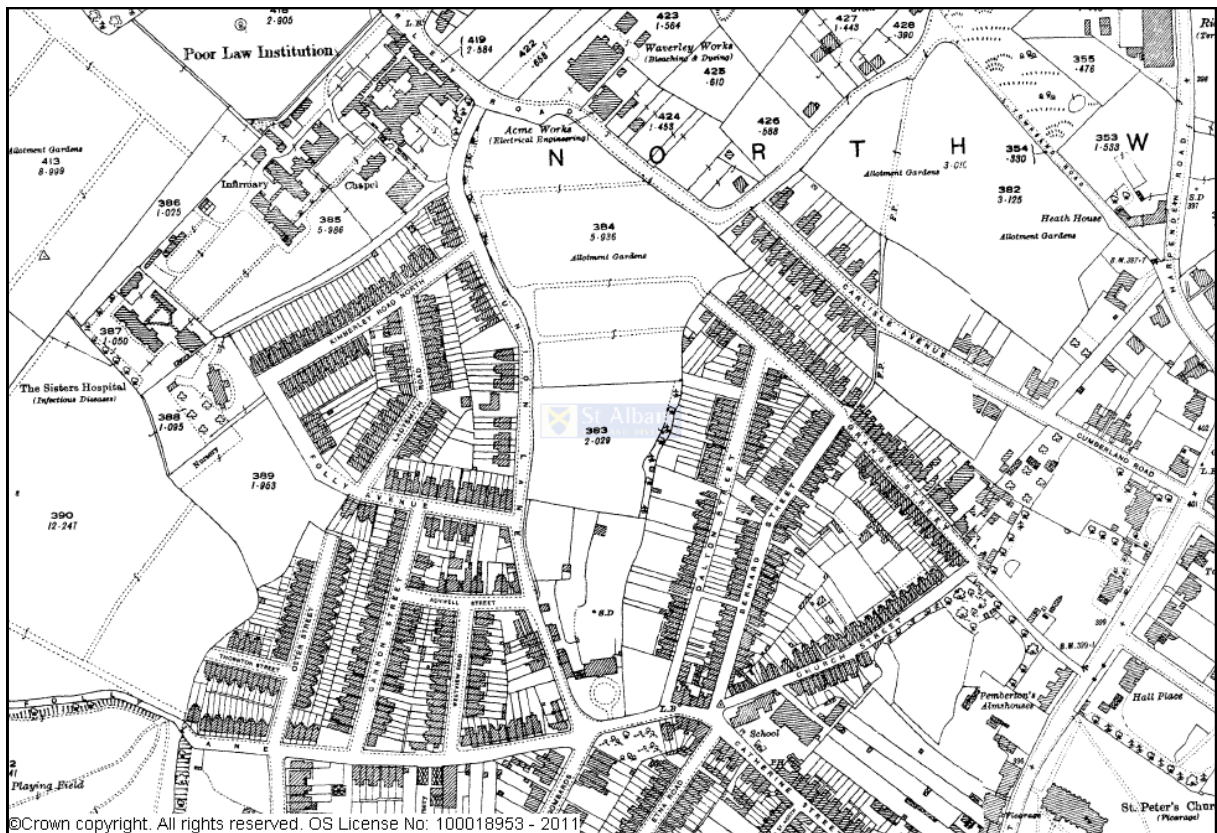
OS Map c 1880.



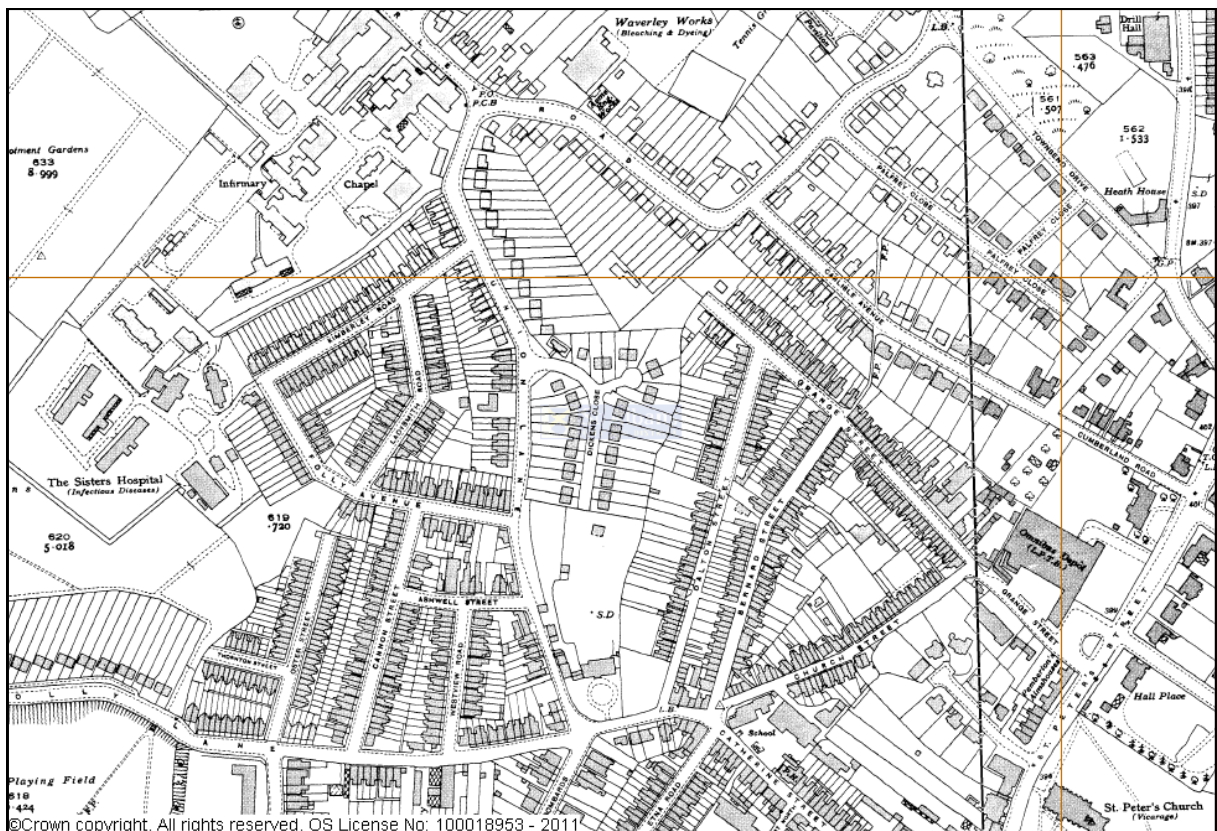
OS Map c 1900.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Historic Maps showing the development of the area



OS Map c 1920.



OS Map c 1940.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

History

In the early C18, Francis Dalton, who is thought to have been a county magistrate and gentleman, built his country retreat in the fields outside St Albans city boundary, on a quiet rural lane which led from the city centre, then called Catherine Lane. The house was then known as The Folly or Dalton's Folly, but was latterly known as Bleak House, when it was mistakenly believed to be the setting of the Dickens novel. It is currently known as Dalton House.



Dalton House. Image courtesy of St Albans Museums.



A watercolour by J H Buckingham showing Folly Lane when it was just a rural lane. Image courtesy of St Albans Museums.

Catherine Lane curved around Dalton House and followed the line of, what is now, Normandy Road. This was an ancient way, which followed the City boundary and eventually joined Everlasting Lane, the road to Harpenden. This lane later became known as Union Lane, the road to the Union Workhouse, when the workhouse was built in 1838, just outside the city boundaries. It was renamed as Normandy Road after the end of the Second World War.

Although one of the earliest roads in the area, the lane was not substantially built up until the early C20. There was a small amount of development around Dalton House but, generally, a clear separation was maintained between the workhouse site and the city centre.

In the early C19, Folly Lane was cut to join Catherine Lane which, together with Branch Road, effectively joined the top of St Peter's Street to St Michael's and gave a means by which the city centre could be bypassed. This was the establishment of what is now a major route from the city, but it was not until the late C19 that Folly Lane started to be developed.

Following the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, workhouse provision by individual parishes was reorganised and the Union Workhouse was built by the St Albans Poor Law Union and opened in 1838, providing accommodation for 200 paupers. An infirmary was built on adjacent land in the mid C19, and subsequently extended in the late C19 and again in the early C20. In later years, when many of those who would formerly have become occupants of the workhouse were accommodated in other specialised residential institutions, the Union Workhouse building became part of the infirmary.

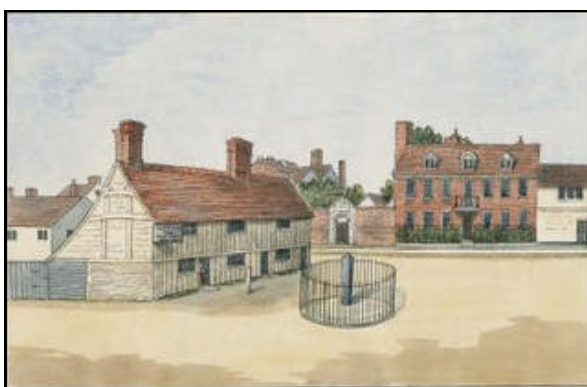
'The Sisters Hospital' was built by Sir John Blundell Maple on land adjacent to the Workhouse in 1893. This fever hospital, dealing with infectious diseases, was sensibly sited on a hill some distance from the city. The hospital was built in memory of Sir John Blundell Maple's two young daughters, who had died from scarlet fever and was donated to the citizens of the City. The hospital, together with the workhouse infirmary, was the genesis of hospital facilities in St Albans, and later the site was further developed, becoming the site of the St Albans City General Hospital.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

History (contd.)

The residential development of this character area started in the early C19. Being nearer to the city centre, the development of Catherine Street started before the development of Folly Lane, although nearly all of this, predominantly residential, Victorian development was swept away at the turn of the C20 century when extensive, more commercially-focused, redevelopment took place. The one remaining early Victorian building on Catherine Street is May Clarke House (nos.15-25). The original Clarke's Almshouses were in the Market Square, but were demolished to make way for the new Town Hall in 1831. Clarke's Almshouses relocated to this, then new, building in Catherine Street.

The area to the north and north east of the Daltons (Church Street, Bernard Street, Dalton Street, & Grange Street) was developed in the early to mid C19. This was the first part of this character area to be developed primarily for housing, although originally, amongst the houses, there would have been a scattering of small shops, workshops and stables. Almost all of these other uses have now disappeared and buildings have been converted to wholly residential use, leaving little or no legacy of their previous uses visible in the built form.



The Clarke's Almshouses on their original site in Market Square before their demolition and relocation to Catherine Street to make room for the Town Hall. Image courtesy of St Albans Museums.

In the late C19, Folly Lane and the area immediately around it started to be developed. New streets were cut, plans laid out for housing plots, and the plots sold to speculative builders. West View Road and Cannon Street were cut and developed for housing in the 1880s. Ashwell Street was cut at the same time, to link the ends of West View Road and Cannon Street. A short street, this was then the edge of developed land. The plot division here was not as regular and tightly defined as in the adjoining streets. Larger plots were available here and, as a result, a mix of uses was originally established here. Commercial premises developed adjacent to the proprietors' houses, notably a large laundry (now Monument Place) and a bakery and shop (no. 6).

Oster Street and Thornton Street were cut and regular plots developed by a single developer, Messrs Andrews of Hertford, in the 1890s.



The corner of Cannon Street with Ashwell Street in the background.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

History (contd.)

It was not until after the turn of the C20 that the land to the west of Normandy Road, beyond Ashwell Street, started to be developed. New streets were cut and residential plots sold to speculative builders. These plots were marketed as the “Folly Mead Estate” and were described as being suitable for “the erection of good class cottages and small villas”. Plot sales and development were undertaken in phases over the next decade. Normandy Road was also plotted and built up, but development was a little more varied on this more major road. Some plots were amalgamated to provide larger plots for commercial and industrial uses, particularly those plots on Normandy Road which were in close proximity to the commercial premises in Ashwell Street. More recently, these commercial plots have been redeveloped for housing and flats so Normandy Road is now predominantly residential, although slightly more mixed in character than the other parts of the “Folly Mead Estate”.

By the early C20, this character area was almost entirely built up. Towards the end of this period, Catherine Street was redeveloped to serve the commercial needs of the burgeoning population and the (original) Garden Fields School (now Jubilee Centre) was established to educate the growing numbers of children in the area.

From 1998, the old hospital site was part of a large scale residential redevelopment, converting some of the original historic buildings. The workhouse building was converted into flats, and is now known as Waverly Lodge. The Sisters Hospital (now Harriet Heights), and the associated administration building (now Sister's Lodge) were also converted into flats. Unsympathetic modern additions were removed and the original elevations were reinstated. The much-altered infirmary building was demolished. A small chapel on the site (built in 1893) was converted to office use. The remainder of modern hospital buildings were demolished and replaced with housing development.



Catherine Street was redeveloped to meet the commercial needs of the area in C20.



Garden Fields School (now Jubilee Centre) was built to educate the growing numbers of children in the area.



There were a number of commercial properties in Ashwell Street, including a bakery and shop at no. 6.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Catherine Street

Excepting May Clarke House, a simple early Victorian, red brick villa, the largely Edwardian development in Catherine Street, is two and two and a half storey, set to the pavement edge, and comprises of, on the south side, small shop units to the ground floor with residential use above, and on the north side, terraced housing. Where there is accommodation within the roof space, original dormers punctuate the front roof slopes, but the overall scale remains two storey. This part of Catherine Street has a very coherent townscape quality with a clear structure in terms of plotting, setback, scale, mass and density.

On the south side, the small shop units at ground floor level, ensure that this part of Catherine Street has a very active frontage. Importantly, most of the shops retain traditional shop fronts and a number previously damaged have been reinstated to match. This range of shops is a secondary shopping frontage, a close adjunct to the town centre. Further west on Catherine Street, past the junction with Etna Road, some residential conversions of shops have taken place, but, where there were traditional shop fronts, these have been retained. On the corner of Etna Road, nos. 65-71, a group of late C19 shops designed by notable local architect Percival Blow, have been converted to residential use. Of particular note is no. 71, which was the stable and cart house associated with the shop at no. 69. The neighbouring houses (nos. 73 and 75), also designed by Percival Blow, mark the start of the predominantly residential development.

On the north side, a long terrace of brick and render cottages (nos. 30-52) were built by the St Peter's Charities in the early C20. This terrace has a strong and simple design reminiscent of early Garden City housing. A late C19 public house (The Pineapple), at the end of this terrace and of similar scale, was demolished and rebuilt by Benskins in the 1930s. Now Bar "62", this later building is slightly set back and thus does not conform to the prevalent pattern of development but, nevertheless, provides an effective terminating building to the long terrace. It is a good quality Arts and Crafts building with a pronounced front gable with interesting eaves, and attractive brick and tile detailing.



The north side of Catherine Street has brick and rendered terraced cottages.



No. 65 Catherine Street has retained its traditional shopfront.



Nos. 67-71 Catherine Street.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Catherine Street contd.

The Jubilee Centre is an interesting landmark building at an important node within this part of the conservation area. Built in the late C19, in the Queen Anne Revival style, it was a St Albans Board school, built for the local school board set up in 1878 (following the Elementary Education Act of 1870), known as Garden Fields School. It was built in two phases; the first phase set back from but addressing Catherine Street, whilst the slightly later Infant School addition was built on Church Street, forming an interesting cranked plan form with buildings enclosing the playground on two sides. The front boundary of the playground is bounded by a red brick wall with the original railings. The gable end of the Infant School, which addresses Catherine Street, is a very prominent feature in the streetscape, terminating the view, at a bend in the road, but beyond this gable, across the playground, there are good unobstructed views of St Peter's Church tower. The original red brick buildings are of fine quality, possessing a wealth of architectural detail, but there are later extensions which do slightly compromise the original architectural form and mask some of the original architectural detail, but could easily be removed. Until recently, the buildings have been used as a day centre.

At the end of Catherine Street, at the key junction where the land starts to drop, is Dalton House. This fine Grade II listed, C18 house is the oldest and architecturally most important building in this area. A Georgian house with classical symmetry, Dalton House is set back from Catherine Street, on a fittingly spacious site which occupies the road frontage between Bernard Street and Dalton Street. It is set behind a wide pavement, railings and a wall including piers with traditional pineapple finials, (wall etc. is separately listed) and an established laurel hedge which fronts its deep, formal, forward courtyard. It is prominent in the street scene, and can be seen in vistas from Catherine Street and Gombards, as well as Folly Lane. Built of dark red brick with blue brick headers, with brighter red brick dressings to the large sash window openings, it is an important landmark building of quality in the City.



Dalton House as seen from Gombards. Image courtesy of St Albans Museums.



The Infant School wing of the former Garden Fields School addresses Catherine Street with its gable which is a prominent feature in the streetscape.



The setback of the Jubilee Day Centre allows for good unobstructed views of St Peter's Church tower.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Church Street, Bernard Street, Dalton Street & Grange Street

These roads, that lie to the north of Catherine Street, developed on a roughly triangular piece of land east of Dalton House and radiate to the rear boundary of the historic burgage plots at the northern end of St Peter's Street.

This is small grained, tightly knit development where there is a great continuity of plotting, scale and materials. The earliest small-scale terraced cottages are in Church Street, the eastern end of Grange Street (nos.1-51), and the southern ends of Bernard and Dalton Streets. These houses are simple in form and are set to the pavement edge in narrow streets. In this early phase of development, the cottages in Dalton Street were built on the west side only, and consequently, the rear of the houses on Bernard Street are clearly visible from Dalton Street. The rear of the houses in Dalton Street are equally visible from the Aboyne Lodge Playing Fields on Normandy Road.

A later phase of development, from the mid to late C19, extended and completed Grange Street and completed Bernard and Dalton Streets. During this later phase, slightly larger and more detailed terraces were built, although the grain of development remains tight. Streets are wider and the terraces are set back from the pavement edge with minimal front gardens. These houses have more varied features, including bay windows and decorative brickwork, than the earlier, more simple, houses.

Church Street, Bernard Street and the first part of Grange Street form a triangular perimeter block, with the apex of the triangle at the point where Church Street and Bernard Street meet, at their junction with Folly Lane. To the rear of the small-scale cottages which line these roads lies a sizeable, triangular-shaped area of land which is an important component of the conservation area's character. Although most of this backland area is in garden use, there is some backland development here. An early Victorian dwelling (Garden Cottage) predates

much of the surrounding development. Two single-storey, nursery and crèche buildings were built in the 1990s. Although low level, these buildings are out of scale with the surrounding development and do not make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area, but they replaced a number of storage buildings, workshops and offices which had evolved over decades to service a builders yard on this site. Garaging and parking areas, which also result in the loss of green space, have come about as a result of permitted development rights.



Church Street.



Bernard Street.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Folly Lane, West View Road, Cannon Street & Ashwell Street

The most easterly part of Folly Lane is at the top of the hill and, from the junction with Catherine Street, the land starts to fall steeply towards the west. The north side of Folly Lane was not all developed as part of a conventional perimeter block, because West View Road and Cannon Street were plotted across the slope of the land to take advantage of more level ground. Primarily, the development here is orientated facing on to West View Road and Cannon Street. The nature of the plotting results in there being some degree of openness on this side of Folly Lane, with views along Cannon Street and West View Road, and outlooks across the rear gardens of these streets punctuating the built development. Towards the top of Folly Lane, there are some late C19 and early C20 century houses on the hill which do address Folly Lane. Folly Villas is a good group of houses that are well detailed and with steps and cast iron railings and gates. The attached short terrace are later, more modest cottages. There are also some individual properties on the corner sites, addressing Folly Lane. Some of these corner properties were shops and, unusually, no. 20 remains in retail use. The residential conversion of the shop at no. 22 is particularly sympathetic to the original building, retaining a traditional shop front as part of the façade

West View Road and Cannon Street were cut in the 1880s, and were built up between 1880 and 1900 with tightly-knit, artisan housing. The regular plotting of these two streets and the well-defined building line is symptomatic of the planned nature of these speculative plotted developments. Houses on the east side of these streets are higher than those on the west side and most have steps up to the front doors and cellars which are partially visible from the street. Houses on the lower, west side of the street are generally more modest. There is some variation between houses, but all are of a similar scale, and are built using similar materials. Local red bricks and Luton greys are most commonly used, both separately and together, with the red

brick being used for the decorative dressings to the window and door openings. Originally, these houses would have had slate roofs, although some unfortunate roof replacement has taken place and the otherwise continuous roofscape has suffered some interruption where roof lights have been inserted in the front roof slopes.

Ashwell Street runs parallel to Folly Lane, running down the hillside. A mix of uses was originally established here in this short street, on the edge of developed land, and therefore the plotting is less regular. As a result of the variety of uses and of the varying plot sizes, there is individuality in the building types and widths, although the heights, in spite of the slope of the hill, are broadly similar. The street is somewhat unified by the use of similar materials and late Victorian architectural style and detailing. All of these properties are now converted to residential use, but the buildings still reflect something of the commercial activity which occurred historically in this street. Unusually, for this area, some of the properties are gabled towards the street. The vista along West View Road is closed by the view of the symmetrically placed gable of no. 4, giving a satisfying sense of enclosure.



West View Road was cut in 1880s and built up 1880-1900.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Folly Lane, Oster Street & Thornton Street

The plots on the south side of Folly Lane were sold with their frontage being either on Gombards, Worley Road or Church Crescent, thus turning their back on Folly Lane. The seven Edwardian houses on the south side of Folly Lane (nos. 5-17) are an exception to the normal pattern of development; these plots were divided; three larger villas were built in Worley Road, whilst seven more modest cottages were built facing Folly Lane. More commonly, the back part of these plots were gardens, but there was a large area of land which was in commercial use, as a nursery. This parcel of land remains in commercial use; the brick built 1970s building, which is currently on this site, is set back from the street with a car park to the fore, and does not make a positive contribution to the conservation area. Throughout the years, these gardens on the south side of Folly Lane have been developed in a rather piecemeal fashion, and those layers of development contribute to a rather disjointed feel. Latterly, development here has been residential, and these newer houses broadly reflect the surrounding Edwardian development in terms of form and materials.



There are mature trees screening Victoria Playing Field at the western end of Folly Lane.

At the very end of the C19, Oster Street and Thornton Street were cut and an estate of yellow stock brick terraces were built. These pretty terraced cottages also spill out onto Folly Lane at its western end. On the opposite side of the road is a mature tree and shrub screen, bordering the Victoria Playing Field: a significant level of greenery which softens this now urban street and reflects something of the past rural character of Folly Lane.

Built as a single entity, Oster Street and Thornton Street offer one of the most regular and homogenous, good quality Victorian developments in St Albans, which remains little altered. The brickwork of these cottages is highly decorative, with polychromatic brick detailing: red brick string courses and dressings to the windows, which are in strong contrast to the main brickwork. Windows are vertically proportioned timber sash windows with rubbed arched lintels. The rhythm of development is reinforced by the small, pitched porches, tiled with timber supports, over each front door.

Houses have a small setback from the street, and low front boundary walls, some with blue brick coping, which remain largely intact (particularly to the west side of Oster Street). The rhythm of the street scene is further reinforced by the established avenue of pollarded lime trees at the pavement edge.



The houses in Oster and Thornton Streets are yellow stock brick with red brick decorative detailing.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Normandy Road, Folly Avenue, Ladysmith Road & Kimberley Road

The junction of Normandy Road with Folly Lane, Catherine Street and Gombards (part of Area 7L) is the oldest crossroads in the area and remains a focal point. From this junction, Normandy Road runs downhill, across the side of the hill, towards the north. To the west of Normandy Road, the land continues downwards, before meeting the land rising towards the old hospital, which is sited on a ridge. Ladysmith Road is set within this crease in the land, and is the lowest point of the area. The rear elevations of houses in Normandy and Kimberley Roads and Folly Avenue appear more prominent from the rear gardens of Ladysmith Road as a result of being on higher ground. The rear elevations of the new hospital development are prominent from Kimberley Road and parts of Folly Avenue for the same reason.

For the most part, this is typical Edwardian urban development; medium-high density, modest family housing. Buildings are two storey and there is a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and small detached houses. The regular plotting and the well defined building line of these streets within the 'Folly Mead Estate' is symptomatic of the planned nature of speculative plotted developments. These are evenly developed streets, with regular narrow plot widths. Buildings have a small setback from the pavement edge, with front boundary walls and gardens, although there is little greenery in these front areas.

Builders bought both individual plots and groups of plots, so there are individual houses and groups of identical houses. There is some variety between the different groups of houses, some are well detailed Edwardian villas, whilst some are more modest cottages. Typical features include bays, porches and polychromatic brickwork; mixing the predominant red brick with Luton grey bricks. Roof pitches are low and the simple roofs would originally have been slate, although there has been some unfortunate roof replacement. Roof ridges are stepped down to follow the downward slope of the hill as neces-

sary. Windows have a vertical emphasis and many buildings retain their original timber sash windows.

However, because of the tight plot parameters, the simple form, the continuity of height, scale, vertical fenestration, and the limited palette of materials, the street frontages have good architectural cohesion and a very defined and rhythmic character. Each house contributes to the street frontage; a few houses are built with a gable style elevation facing onto the road, adding some variety into the streetscape.



The junction of Catherine Street, Folly Lane, Normandy Road and Gombards is a focal point in the area.



Many of the houses in the Folly Mead Estate display polychromatic brick detailing, like this house on Normandy Road.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Normandy Road, Folly Avenue, Ladysmith Road, Kimberley Road (contd.)

Normandy Road is a relatively busy road, a through route, rather than a purely residential road. There is some slight variation in development in Normandy Road, where there is a small amount of more recent development mixed into the Edwardian framework due to the redevelopment of previously commercial sites. Although there are variations in style, the scale of development remains reasonably constant.

At its southern end, near the junction with Folly Lane, the east side is sparsely developed. Dalton House and Bleak House Mews are the only buildings on this side of the road. Bleak House Mews is a sensitive new development of four terraced houses, built in the grounds of Dalton House in 2003. Taking the form of an old carriage house, the form and materials are sympathetic to the character of the conservation area and to the setting of Dalton House, although it largely turns its back on Normandy Road. The Aboyne Lodge School playing fields are beyond these buildings to the north and are a welcome green space in this essentially urban area. The playing fields are well screened; a wall at the back edge of the pavement retains a bank, which is planted with mature shrubs and trees. This planting adds greenery to the urban setting of Normandy Road and is a positive feature within the conservation area. Through gaps in this green screen, there are views across the playing fields to the rear of houses on Dalton Street. The galvanised fencing and gates on the boundaries of the playing fields are obviously utilitarian, but a rather insensitive addition - a negative element. Further north, beyond the playing fields, the east side of the road is not included within the conservation area.

The west side of Normandy Road is more densely developed. The small cottages at the junction with Folly Lane (nos. 1-5) are the only remaining examples of Victorian development in this area, although they have been altered substantially by the addition of poor fenestration and unsympathetic roofing materials. The small 1980s ter-

raced cottages on the corner of Ashwell Street (nos. 21-25a) are acceptable infill development, although these houses are not rich in architectural detailing like some of their neighbours. The 1980s development of flats at Folly Court is of an appropriate scale, but is let down by poor form, detailing and materials. On the corner of Ashwell Street and Folly Avenue, the side elevations of the new corner houses address Normandy Road and are built to the back of the pavement edge. Most of these gabled side elevations have windows, which mitigate the potentially overbearing impact of what would otherwise be large expanses of brickwork.



Bleak House Mews is a sensitive modern development.



The cottages on the corner of Normandy Road with Folly Lane (nos. 1-5) are the only remaining examples of Victorian development in this area.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Normandy Road, Folly Avenue, Ladysmith Road, Kimberley Road (contd.)

The top end of Folly Avenue is built up with closely packed, well-detailed Edwardian semi-detached villas, sometimes abutted to form into a terrace. There is some variety in the elevations of these houses, and all are good quality. All have bay windows, and some have two storey outthrust gables to the front, forming double height square bays. Window styles are also different, although all are timber with a vertical emphasis, and most are sash windows.

Throughout the rest of the Folly Mead Estate, that is the remainder of Folly Avenue, Ladysmith Road and Kimberley Road, the housing is generally more modest and less detailed; cottages rather than villas. The terraces on the west side of Folly Avenue, towards Kimberley Road, were built in the late 1920s and, although they lack the finesse and the good quality materials of the earlier Edwardian development, they are of a similar form and scale.

Century Close is a late 1990s development of flats and terraced houses. Two-storey, with a traditional form and built with appropriate materials (red brick, slate and timber windows), the front elevations are marred by the external stairs which lead to the first floor flats. The rear of the serpentine terrace in Goldsmith Way can be clearly seen from Century Close, as can the rear of the houses in Oster Street.



The top end of Folly Avenue is built up with closely packed, well-detailed Edwardian villas.



The houses in Ladysmith Road (above) and Kimberley Road (below) are more modest and less detailed.



Century Close is a late 1990s residential development.



Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Spatial Analysis

Goldsmith Way, Newmarket Court & Fal-mouth Court

The historic institutional buildings provide the framework of this part of the character area. Waverley Lodge is a large, rather austere building which attests to its original function as a workhouse (opened in 1838). It is a classically regular building, with good symmetry and a clear simplicity; the two storey wings about a three storey central element, lozenge shaped on plan, which is the main entrance into the building. This red brick building with low pitched slate roofs, has no ornate detailing – the regular positioning of the large twelve-paned sash windows is the main feature of the façade. It is set in a prominent position, on the top of a slope down to Goldsmith Way and Normandy Road and is prominent in views from Waverley Road.

The chapel is an attractive low flint building with a small bell tower feature and ornate windows including a war memorial stained glass window (1952) by Christopher Webb. Built in 1893, this building is set at the entrance of Goldsmith Way with a small green play space to the fore.

Harriet Heights (the former Sister's Hospital built as a fever hospital) is sited at the centre of the new housing development on a ridge of high ground. Two tall storeys with a high pitched, red tiled roof, the main feature of the front elevation is the central two storey gable with half timbering and arched windows with decorative dressings.

Designed by Morton Glover ARIBA, a contemporary illustration appeared in "The Building News". This is a well decorated and hugely detailed building, built in the Queen Anne revival style which was so popular at the end of the C19. A varied palette of materials was used, but the building is predominantly red brick with stone dressings. Sister's Lodge (the former administrative block) is in a similar style but of a smaller more domestic scale with sliding sash windows

The modern housing that surrounds these buildings is in mixed format including in the main terraces, a few flatted blocks and some semi-detached pairs. A predominantly formal layout complements the historic buildings and nearby Edwardian streets. To the rear of Harriet Heights is a formal avenue with landscaping, Sister's Lodge closes the vista at the end of the first section of Goldsmith Way and, to the rear of the Sister's Lodge, there is a small open green space. The layout includes an unusual long serpentine of terraced housing with stepped ridges along the contour designed to curve away at its western end to open up a view down hill towards the Abbey. The development is unified through scale (two and a half storey), style and the use of a limited palette complementing the original buildings. Natural and traditional materials are in evidence – a quality red brick, plain clay tiles and natural slates and painted timber joinery - windows, doors, garage doors and conservatories.



Waverley Lodge is the former workhouse, now in residential use.



The former Sisters Hospital was converted to residential use with additional modern blocks and now known as Harriet Heights.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Public Realm

Apart from Catherine Street, which contains a mix of retail and residential, this is predominantly an urban residential area, densely developed and with little green space. Most of the green space is within the gardens of houses but, where there are gardens, these are small and, individually, can only make a limited contribution. For the most part, there is little greenery within these front garden areas and more planting could soften the urban character of the area.

Generally, there are few green areas within the dense framework of the late C19/early C20 residential development. The open space of the Aboyne Lodge Playing Fields is private space, although it makes some contribution to a feeling of spaciousness. The Victoria Playing Field is a public open space, and is included within the Verulam Road Character Area 5b. There are some small green areas included within the re-developed hospital site.

The trees and mature shrubs in the borders of the Victoria Playing Field and of the Aboyne Lodge Playing Fields are the largest, most visible areas of established planting within the area. The mature trees in the rear gardens of St Peter's Close, which are part of the outlook from the houses in Church Street, are also valuable. There are a few significant mature trees within the streetscape. The pollarded limes on Oster Street and Thornton Street are important within the streetscape and are protected by tree preservation orders. There are mature trees to the fore of Dalton House, and some protected pines to the side and a street tree on the wide pavement outside the site is also an important asset.

Throughout the area, there are a number of historic brick walls which bound the edge of the footpath. The wall, piers and railings to the front of Dalton House is separately listed. The wall and railings of the Jubilee Centre give some permeability to the dense streetscape, opening up views into the former playground to the fore and to St Peter's Church in the longer view. The historic brick wall which bounds the rear gardens of St Peter's Close, where they abut Church Street, is also a positive feature.



The front gardens in this area are small and so can only make a limited contribution. However, increased planting would soften the area's urban character.



The trees screening Aboyne Lodge Playing Fields make a positive contribution to the streetscene.



Shops on Catherine Street seen from the playground of the former school site with its railings in the foreground.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Public Realm

Within this area, streets are generally narrow, as are the pavements. For the most part, the paving is concrete setts (in Catherine Street, near to the town centre), paving slabs and blacktop tarmac. There are small areas of historic paving. Blue brick paving at the junction of Catherine Street, Church Street and Bernard Street adds quality into the streetscape and visually reinforces the status of this junction as a key node. Blue brick paving is also in evidence at the start of Dalton Street, and throughout Oster Street and Thornton Street, enhancing the historic character. To the fore of Dalton House, the wide pavement is laid to York Stone, but what should be an expanse of stone, contributing to the setting of the listed building, has been somewhat broken up and degraded by the addition of modern lamp posts, street clutter and highways paraphernalia, in particular red tactile paving, control boxes and a superfluous barrier.

Catherine Street, Folly Lane and, to a lesser extent, Normandy Road are main through roads within the area. These are busy roads, where traffic tends to dominate. Within the residential side roads, and particularly within the narrower mid-C19 streets nearest to the town centre, parking is a problem. The densely plotted housing

and narrow plotting exacerbates the problem. In Dalton Street, the outlook to the rear gardens of Bernard Street is somewhat degraded by the use of the rearmost part of these gardens for parking and garaging. Both the haphazard nature of the parking arrangements and the consequent loss of green space are particularly detrimental to the appearance of Dalton Street. Although this street presents the most obvious example, throughout all of those streets planned in the C19 and early C20, frontages are dominated by parked cars, and this does impact negatively on the character of the area. Within the later hospital redevelopment, parking was better thought out, in order to avoid domination of the street scene by cars within this dense development. Garaging is, as far as possible, set back behind the semi-detached buildings. In the terraces, integral garages and landscaped garden forecourts incorporating some car parking spaces are included. There are also some landscaped areas of communal and visitor parking.

Slightly set back from the junction of Catherine Street, Church Street and Bernard Street, a large advertising hoarding to the side wall of no. 1 Church Street is an inappropriate feature in the conservation area.



The blue brick paving at the junction of Catherine Street, Church Street and Bernard Street reinforces it as a focal point.



Parking is an issue because of the narrow plot widths.

Area 7k: Folly Lane, Garden Fields & The Old Hospital

Public Realm

Positive

- ✓ Predominantly mid C19 to early C20 development with minimal later intervention.
- ✓ The architectural cohesion and good architectural detailing of 'planned' turn of the C20 development.
- ✓ Residential areas with a strong identity and distinctiveness.
- ✓ Good quality, family houses set away from main thoroughfares – 'home zones'.
- ✓ The beautifully detailed, homogenous houses and good quality streetscape of Oster Street and Thornton Street.
- ✓ The well-detailed, landmark, historic, institutional buildings on the former hospital site.
- ✓ The fine early C18 Dalton House and its (relatively) spacious and verdant setting.
- ✓ Secondary shopping in independent shops in Catherine Street.
- ✓ The Jubilee Centre as a landmark building with historical community use.
- ✓ The views of open countryside from Folly Lane.

Neutral

- Some later infill and redevelopment: e.g., Folly Court and Century Close.

Negative

- ✗ Traffic on Catherine Street and Folly Lane.
- ✗ Parking in the narrow streets.
- ✗ The poor townscape qualities of land to the rear of properties on Bernard Street forming the street frontage of Dalton Street.
- ✗ The boundary railings and gates to the Aboyne Lodge Playing Fields.

Scope for change

- Improvements to traffic management and parking.
- Removal of street clutter, highway paraphernalia, extraneous signage and advertising hoarding from Catherine Street.
- Improvements to the Dalton Street streetscape at the rear of Bernard Street.
- More planting and greenery to front gardens throughout the area.
- Unsympathetic changes to windows, doors and architectural details can easily erode the iteration and rhythm of the C19 frontages.
- Plot division and infilling could easily damage the original C19 street plan, the regularity of which is fundamental to the character of the area.